

WHAT'S IN THE MEAT THAT AMERICANS EAT?

Americans are just beginning to learn exactly what goes into their beefsteak, pork spare-ribs and hamburgers.

Among some of the additives fed to cattle and pigs in our modern age are sewage sludge, dead cats and dogs, slaughterhouse waste, chicken manure and old fat from restaurants and grease traps.

It all started coming to light when agricultural inspectors tried to trace the source of contaminated hamburgers from a food plant in Columbus, Nebraska. It soon became apparent that the Columbus problem was just one example of many threats to the nation's meat supply.

Chicken manure, which costs from US\$15 to \$45 per ton (in comparison to alfalfa at around \$125 per ton), is increasingly being used as feed by cattle farmers across the nation.

Researchers found that the following is routinely fed to the nation's cattle and pigs: agricultural waste (corn cobs, rice hulls, fruit and vegetable peelings, plus by-products of baked goods, cereals and beer production); slaughterhouse waste (blood, bone, viscera); plus the remains of millions of euthanised cats and dogs passed on from veterinarians and animal shelters.

They have also found that animal feed manufacturers have begun using dehydrated food garbage, fats from restaurant fry-



ers and grease traps, cement-kiln dust, newsprint and cardboard, cattle and pig manure, and even human sewage sludge.

(Source: *The Sunday Mail*, Brisbane, 31 August 1997)

MEDIA SPIN EXPOSED ON EM FIELD DANGERS

In early July 1997, major media organisations featured stories about the just-released US National Cancer Institute study, conducted by Dr Martha Linet, in which it was claimed that there was no evidence that powerline electromagnetic fields increase childhood leukaemia risks.

It is unfortunate that reporters and so-called experts—who are now quoting the

NCI study as positive proof that a risk does not exist from long-term exposure to electromagnetic fields—did not take the time to examine critically what the study had actually found.

In the study (published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on 3 July 1997), NCI researchers actually acknowledge, in no less than four places, a statistically significant increase in acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) in children exposed to powerline magnetic fields in excess of three milligauss (mG). This is a confirmation of many previous studies which have shown a similar level of association between childhood leukaemia and magnetic fields from electricity.

An article in *The Australian* (4 July 1997) mentions that the researchers dismissed as a "statistical fluke" a 24% increase in leukaemia risk for children exposed to what is termed "especially high magnetic fields".

The NCI researchers were able to dismiss this fact by arbitrarily setting a 2 mG level as a cut-off limit. The fact is that if they had used the 3 mG level as a cut-off point in their calculations, the conclusions would have been exactly the opposite—that there is a *significant* risk.

Professor Ross Adey, one of the most respected bioelectromagnetics researchers in the US and author of numerous books and research papers on the biological effects of EMFs, made the following comments in response to a 4 July e-mail from the EMFacts Information Service:

"A number of us worked on the NCI paper through last weekend. Sam Milham, the Washington state epidemiologist and a pioneer in this field, points out that if they had included the 3 mG level in their cutoff, the conclusions would have been exactly the opposite—that there *is* a significant risk, and selection of 2 mG is quite arbitrary."

(Source: *Electromagnetics Forum*, Volume 1, No. 3, Winter 1997)

NUCLEAR WASTE PUMPED INTO LONDON'S DRINKING WATER

It recently came to light that up to 20,000 gallons of water containing tritium and other radioactive substances have been pumped into London's drinking water supply every day for the past 50 years.



Recently declassified documents from the Public Record Office show that discharges from the Atomic Energy Authority's sites at Aldermaston, Harwell, and Amersham into the Thames began in secret in 1948.

According to the documents, radioactive effluent was fed into the river by way of the River Colne, upstream of the intake pipes for London's drinking supply. (Source: *The Weekly Telegraph*, London, 16-22 July 1997)

STUDY SHOWS HRT INCREASES BREAST CANCER RISK

Prolonged use of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) increases the risk of breast cancer by up to 100 per cent, according to data from the US Nurses' Health Study which followed 60,000 postmenopausal women for 18 years.

The study found that 10 years' use of oestrogen alone increased the risk of breast cancer by 30 to 40 per cent compared with women of the same age who never used postmenopausal HRT. (Source: *Australian Doctor*, 29 August 1997)

UNSEEN CORPORATE CHIEFS CONTROL EUROPE

For the last 15 years Europe has, in effect, been run not by politicians or bureaucrats but by a little-known group of transnational corporations called the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT).

A report called "Europe Inc.", released by the Dutch-based Corporate Europe Observatory, shows that the ERT was the driving force behind the EEC's internal market in the 1980s, the 1991 Maastricht Treaty and the social welfare-cutting single currency.

Founded in 1983, the ERT is made up of 45 business leaders from large European transnational corporations whose combined turnover approaches US\$880 billion. They include BP, Shell, Daimler-Benz, Fiat and Siemens. Their aim is to shape EC policies towards their preferences.

Corporate Europe Observatory researchers investigated ERT documents and European Union files and carried out extensive interviews with representatives of lobby groups supported by transnational corporations.

(Source: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 August 1997)

ANIMALS HIT THE HEADLINES

Member states of the European Union have agreed to change the legal definition of animals to "sentient beings", rather than goods or agricultural products, when formulating agriculture, transport and research policies. But the new definition is unlikely to affect the way animals are used in research.

(Source: *Nature*, Vol. 388, 3 July 1997)

Rats and mice have developed the ability to chew through layers of plastic and metal, and gnaw their way into fridges and freezers in their frenzy to find the food they crave. Fast-food chains are partly to blame as they provide a constant source of fried fish, chicken and hamburgers.

As TV documentary-maker Maurice Melzak says, some mice and rats are now unable to digest their usual diets and crave the fats and proteins found in fast food.

(Sources: *The Sunday Telegraph*, 13 July 1997, *Daily Mail*, London, 5 July 1997)

Seagulls are getting hungrier and smarter. In southern Argentina, giant seagulls which have grown well beyond their normal size—thanks to a diet of rubbish and fish scraps dumped by local fleets—have taken to swooping on top of whales and gouging out chunks of flesh.

According to local whale-watching groups, the seagulls cause wounds up to seven centimetres deep and cause intense pain to the whales and their calves.

Meanwhile, in Toronto, Canada, seagulls have taken to guiding and herd-

ing flocks of migrating birds so that they crash into skyscraper windows. The gulls then dive down and feed off the corpses.

Daniel Klem of the University of Pennsylvania calculates that lit-up buildings and smokestacks kill hundreds of millions of birds every year in North America. (Sources: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 August 1997; *New Scientist*, 6 Sept. 1997)

MAGGOT THERAPY BLOWS IN

Californian medical researcher Dr Ronald Sherman is reporting successes with the age-old use of live maggots, *Phaenicia sericata*, to treat open wounds.

Working at the University of California's Irvine Medical Center, Dr Sherman, with 15 years of research behind him, is leading the drive to increase the use of maggot therapy around the world.

Operating like a natural antibiotic, the maggots eat the dead tissue in a wound, then kill any lingering bacteria by excreting a solution similar to ammonia.

As an alternative to conventional antibiotics, maggot therapy is being hailed as a weapon in the treatment of bedsores, leg ulcers, diabetic foot wounds and stubborn post-surgical infections.

Dr Sherman grows maggots—larvae propagated by the green blowfly—in sterile conditions in his laboratory. The flies that lay the eggs which hatch into maggots are force-fed on Gainers Fuel 1000, a supplement popular with many bodybuilders. Up to 20,000 maggot eggs are placed in a

The amazing chameleon



vial at one time, and after hatching they are fed sterilised meat.

The larvae are then placed in special bandages which hold them in place after they are applied to a human wound.

"The dressing keeps them in place," Dr Sherman says. "But if some drop out, I just scoop them up."

A cycle of maggot therapy lasts for up to three days, during which time the larvae fatten up on dead tissue.

"When they're close to maturing, they start to leave the wound and I take the dressings off," the doctor said.

The 40-year-old medical researcher has just been awarded a grant from the US National Institutes of Health to study the biochemistry of maggot therapy.

(Source: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 July 1997)

MINED OVER MATTER

The US Government's reluctance to back the Canadian campaign for a global moratorium on the manufacture and use of landmines has been on the basis that mines are necessary to protect American servicemen.

But now it has been officially acknowledged that American servicemen have been the primary victims of US-made landmines during both the Korean and Vietnam wars. An estimated 64,000 US servicemen were killed or wounded by mines during Vietnam alone, and a recent report shows that 90 per cent of the landmines and explosive booby-traps involved were either

US-made or assembled by enemy troops using American components.

This information was made public in Washington recently in a report, titled "In Its Own Words", by two groups, Human Rights Watch and the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, campaigning for a ban on landmines.

The report quotes a former Marine Corps commandant, General Alfred Gray, as saying: "We kill more Americans with our own mines than we do anyone else."

(Sources: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 July 1997; *The Guardian Weekly*, London, w/e 10 August 1997)

PLUTONIUM FOUND IN TEETH OF BRITISH TEENAGERS

A study funded by the UK Department of Health has found plutonium in the teeth of adolescents throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The study's authors concluded that the source of the contamination was radioactive discharges from the Sellafield plutonium reprocessing plant, operated by the government-controlled British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL).

The study, entitled "Variations in the Concentration of Plutonium, Strontium-90 and Total Alpha-emitters in Human Teeth Collected within the British Isles", has been published in the *Science of the Total Environment Journal*. It involved the evaluation of over 3,300 teeth extracted from adolescent children in the UK.

Plutonium, which is an alpha-emitter, is

highly carcinogenic and remains an extreme health hazard for tens of thousands of years if released into the environment. Plutonium is effectively 'man-made' and has been produced primarily for use in nuclear weapons.

The new revelations about pollution from Sellafield come in the midst of growing concern in France about the La Hague plutonium factory which annually pumps some 230 million litres of nuclear waste into the Atlantic.

(Source: Sent via the Internet from ay903@lafn.org, 2 August 1997)

'FAKING IT' REACHES NEW DEPTHS

One of Germany's leading cancer researchers faked data for almost a decade, according to an official investigation commission.

Friedhelm Herrmann, now at the University of Ulm, has nearly 400 scientific publications to his credit, but the commission concluded that at least 37 of them appear to contain fabricated results.

The alleged fraud went unnoticed until earlier this year when a former researcher complained to university officials.

Herrmann, who has served on many government committees responsible for distributing research funds, denies the charges.

(Source: *New Scientist*, 16 August 1997)

LAWSUITS RUN AMOK

In North Carolina, 14 students hired a lawyer and sued Johnston County after they failed a grade-school proficiency test.

The students say, through their lawyer, the test discriminated against them because they weren't smart enough to pass it.

A trial date has yet to be set.

(Source: *The Spotlight*, 1 September 1997)

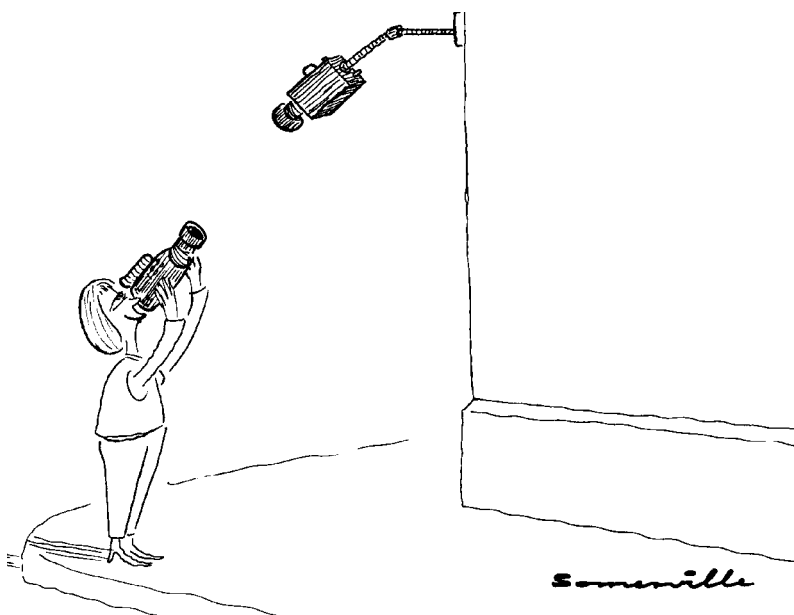
ANTI-NOISE INVENTION

A British inventor has come up with a device which may be the world's first 'anti-noise' invention that can block out most outside sounds over a large area.

The Electronic Controlled Acoustic Shadow System (ECASS) was originally invented to combat industrial noise, but is expected to be adapted for domestic use.

Professor Selwyn Wright has been working on the ECASS project for three years at the University of Huddersfield. His R&D was funded by Yorkshire Electricity who wanted to silence low-frequency humming from its residential substations.

ECASS is made up of a computer and a



set of eight microphones and loudspeakers. A microphone positioned near the source of the offending noise feeds it into the computer, which analyses the sound and broadcasts its exact electronic opposite, cancelling it out to produce silence.

(Source: *Daily Mail*, UK, 29 July 1997)

CONDITIONS IN THE WOMB INFLUENCE IQ

Mothers may be able to influence the intelligence of their children by altering what they eat or by avoiding certain toxins during pregnancy, according to a study released by researchers at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania.

Until now, it has been assumed that any contribution to a child's IQ before birth must be genetic. Instead, the researchers say that up to 20 per cent of the variation in IQ in the population is down to the very early environmental influence of the womb. This means that the womb is probably a bigger shaper of IQ than any other single environmental influence such as school or home life.

(Source: *The Weekly Telegraph*, London, 6-12 August 1997)

STEALTH BOMBER IS A 'WASHOUT'!

One of the most expensive aircraft ever built, the US Air Force's B-2 *Stealth* bomber, has a major problem: its paint washes off in the rain!

According to a report from the US General Accounting Office, the bomber's special radar-absorbing coating material is a little too delicate. The composite material quickly degrades and loses its 'invisibility' if exposed to rain, heat and humidity.

The price tag of about US\$2.1 billion per plane (which is five times its own weight in gold) does not include the need for special air-conditioned hangars if the plane is used in operations based outside the USA.

(Sources: *The Daily Telegraph*, London, 21 August; *New Scientist*, 23 August 1997)

SHELL REJECTS OIL RIGHTS?

To the shock of the environmental community, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) nominated Shell and three other oil companies for a 1997 British Columbia Minister's Environmental Award, for agreeing to give up their rights to explore for oil off BC's Queen Charlotte Islands.

(Source: *Earth Island Journal*, Summer 1997/Winter (southern hemisphere) 1997)

— US FARMERS USING TOXIC WASTE AS FERTILISER! —

According to a lengthy investigation and reports printed in the *Seattle Times* in July, massive amounts of this country's hazardous industrial wastes, "including such toxic heavy metals as lead, cadmium, arsenic and even radioactive substances", are being incorporated into fertilisers that are unwittingly being applied to agricultural lands all over the United States. This is being done with the approval and even the blessing of the EPA. How could this be?

Rail cars arrive at Bay Zinc Co. in Moxee City, Washington, carrying toxic waste from two Oregon steel mills. Bay Zinc has a federal permit to store hazardous wastes in two of its silos. The toxic waste goes into the top of each silo and is then taken out of the bottom as raw material for fertiliser. According to the *Seattle Times* piece, Bay Zinc's president Dick Camp said, "When it goes into our silo, it's a hazardous waste. When it comes out of the silo, it's no longer regulated. The exact same material. Don't ask me why. That's the wisdom of the EPA."

The *Seattle Times* investigated what it reports can only be described as a nightmare: industrial waste laden with toxic heavy metals being recycled as fertiliser ingredients and being spread legally over crop fields across the USA.

In Gore, Oklahoma, a uranium processing plant is spraying 9,000 acres of grazing land with 10 million gallons per year of its low-level radioactive waste by licensing it as liquid fertiliser. State and federal officials approved the "fertiliser" in 1986. The material is being piped to 75 acres of Bermuda grass pasture where up to 400 cattle graze. A two-nosed cow, a nine-legged frog and 124 cases of cancer and birth defects in families living near the plant have been reported.

In Tifton County, Georgia, five southeastern steel mills paid Sogreen Corp. to take their waste, a dust consisting of 10% zinc, 3.6% lead, cadmium and chromium. Sogreen dubbed its product (a mixture of one part waste plus three parts lime) "Lime Plus". Zinc was listed as a micronutrient, but there was no mention of lead, cadmium and chromium as ingredients. Over 1,000 acres of peanut crops grown for human consumption were killed by the mixture. Farmers who used it are trying to detoxify their soils. They don't want their names or farms identified.

Deer Trail, Colorado, farmers have doubts about Denver's plan to cycle liquid waste from the Lowry landfill—one of the worst Superfund sites in the country—through its sewage treatment facility, then combine it with sewage sludge and apply it to a 50,000-acre wheat farm owned by the government.

The *Times* states, "The EPA is considering the novel disposal plan in a ruling that may set a precedent for new ways to clean up Superfund sites. A public comment period ended June 30."

Stoller Chemical of Charleston sent 3,000 tons of cadmium- and lead-loaded waste for fertiliser to Bangladesh and Australia in 1992. They did not notify the EPA of these especially toxic shipments, and a US attorney noted that, "We just happened to catch it." The company was fined US\$1 million. In the meantime, before it was recalled, the fertiliser had been spread on rice fields in Bangladesh and on pastures and market gardens in Australia.

Two Californian fertiliser companies are being investigated for mixing zinc into a hazardous waste product to sell as a "zinc-based fertiliser". Similar investigations are ongoing in Missouri, New York and Texas.

By attaching a fertiliser factory to the Nucor steel mill in Nebraska, Alabama-based Frit Industries avoided having to get a federal permit to use some of its toxic by-products. The black waste comes from a pollution-control device in the steel mill's chimney. It is rich in zinc, a plant nutrient. It is also rich in lead and cadmium. The dust is a federal hazardous waste unless it is turned into fertiliser. The Frit fertiliser product is sold to fertiliser dealers in the heart of US corn country and "to custom blenders throughout the Midwest", according to the *Seattle Times*.

An Idaho organic fertiliser manufacturer, John Hatfield, is quoted in the report: "Nucor didn't want to ship their lead zinc dust to Monterrey, Mexico, at \$100 a ton, and so they got Frit Industries to move in there. You say, how do I know that? Because they asked me to do it before Frit." Hatfield declined.

In Camas, Washington, a highly corrosive, state-classified, dangerous waste is collected from the chimney of a paper mill on the Columbia River. Seven hundred tons of the stuff is collected a month. Workers add water to it, put it into trucks and bring it to six farms where it is spread on 425 acres of farmland. It is then called "NutriLime", a farm product registered for use in Washington and Oregon. It is turned into soils growing oats, grass, clover and other pasture for livestock. In samples of the ash tested by state regulators in 1991, four parts per million of lead were found. Later tests showed 562 parts per million.

According to the *Times*, mill manager A.G. Elsbree said, "The popularity of NutriLime is growing daily, and we look forward to serving the agricultural community."

A trucker picks up toxic ash from a plant in California and has to hang a hazardous waste sign on his truck. When he crosses the border into Nevada, Oregon or Washington, he can take the sign off. The hazardous waste is now a fertiliser component.

(Sources: *The Ark Institute*, 25 July 1997, and *The Seattle Times*, 3, 4 and 13 July 1997. For the full report, "Fear in the Fields", by Duff Wilson, see the *Times'* web page, www.seattletimes.com)